



CONGRESSMAN
CHARLIE MELANCON
LOUISIANA'S 3RD DISTRICT



Congressman Charlie Melancon, Louisiana's 3rd District

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Dear Friend,

As 2006 comes to an end, I want to say it was a pleasure to meet and talk with so many friends across the 3rd District over the past year. For those of you I have had the opportunity to meet with or who have corresponded with my staff, I appreciate hearing your ideas for what can be done to make life better in south Louisiana. Please keep the input coming.

I was especially encouraged to hear people express gratitude for the support Louisiana has secured in Congress for hurricane reconstruction and protection and hope for our future. In the last three months alone, over \$150 million in disaster recovery grants has been designated for parishes in the 3rd District. We have a long road ahead, but we have already made enormous strides this year.

Offshore Revenue-Sharing Legislation

This month marked a historic victory for Louisiana's future. After decades of producing energy for our country and getting almost none of the royalties in return; after decades of watching our coastal marshes, estuaries, and barrier islands wash away into the Gulf; after decades of fighting in Congress for a fair royalty-sharing agreement, we finally secured a better deal for Louisiana. In the closing hours of the 109th Congress, both the House and Senate passed the Domenici-Landrieu Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (S. 3711) and the President signed the bill into law earlier this week.

The passage of this important legislation increases energy production in the Gulf of Mexico and gives Louisiana a substantial share—projected at \$13 billion



Rep. Charlie Melancon speaks on the House floor in support of offshore-revenue sharing for Louisiana.

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over the next 30 years—of royalties from oil and natural gas drilling off of our shores for coastal restoration, hurricane protection and flood control projects.

The legislation also includes a two-year extension of the Gulf Opportunity (GO) Zone tax incentive that provides strong incentives for companies to invest in the Louisiana parishes hit hardest by last year's hurricanes.

I want to thank all the people who have fought for years for offshore revenue sharing, including the entire Louisiana Congressional delegation, Gov. Blanco, and advocacy groups like Women of the Storm, America's WETLAND, Parishes Against Coastal Erosion, the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, and many others who have worked tirelessly to help educate members of Congress about how crucial revenue-sharing is for Louisiana's future.

Hurricane Recovery

To help lay the groundwork for Congress to pass this critical revenue-sharing legislation, in August I led a delegation of 25 Democratic members of Congress to the Gulf Coast to commemorate the anniversary of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and view how much work still needs to be done for Louisiana to fully recover. I wanted the members to meet directly with the people in Louisiana who are working every day to rebuild our schools, our homes, our health care system, our levees, and our state. Not only did we open a lot of eyes, but we developed specific legislative goals that will help Louisiana cut through the bureaucratic red tape holding us back and finally get the assistance we need to recover and rebuild.

These goals were outlined in the House Katrina Task Force's October report entitled "Response, Relief, and Recovery: Katrina and Beyond." This report is a detailed plan of action for how we in Congress can better help Louisiana and the entire Gulf Coast recover from Katrina and Rita. Better levees, reforming FEMA, and fast-tracking coastal restoration and comprehensive hurricane protection projects are all included. This report is also a blueprint for how we can better respond to disasters in the future, wherever they may strike. You can read the Katrina Task Force report by going to the homepage of my website (www.melancon.house.gov) and clicking on the link in the welcome letter.

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Catastrophic Insurance

Do you support the creation of a federal catastrophic insurance program to cover people devastated by hurricanes, earthquakes, and other natural disasters not covered by traditional private insurance carriers?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not sure

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Most Important Issue for Southeastern Louisiana

What is the most important issue facing southeastern Louisiana today?

- ☐ Hurricane protection/coastal restoration
☐ Affordable health care
☐ Improving education
☐ Job creation
☐ Combatting illegal immigration

Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)

As you may remember, in 2005 we were able to pass the Water Resources Development Act in the House, which included authorizations for over \$1.2 billion for vital south Louisiana hurricane protection and coastal restoration projects. Among the many important projects that will be authorized once WRDA is passed is the Morganza to the Gulf hurricane and storm protection project. When the entire Morganza to the Gulf project is complete, this series of levees, locks and other flood control systems through Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes will protect about 200,000 people and 1,700 square miles of land against the kind of catastrophic flooding and storm surges we experienced during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

This September, I was also able to pass a motion in the House instructing the negotiators of the final WRDA bill to mandate that all flood and hurricane protection projects authorized in WRDA for south Louisiana be built to category five level of a protection. I am pleased Congress, including the entire Louisiana delegation, voiced their support for category five protection by overwhelmingly passing this motion.

Although the Senate passed their version of WRDA this summer, the House and Senate leadership were unable to negotiate a compromise bill and once again Congress adjourned without passing this important piece of legislation.

Like many people in south Louisiana, I am very discouraged by Congress's inability to pass WRDA. Despite the fact that they are supposed to pass a new WRDA bill every two years, Congress has not passed a WRDA bill in SIX years, putting countless much-needed projects on hold. With the new leadership in Congress, I am hopeful that we will finally pass a WRDA in 2007 and get moving on important hurricane protection and coastal restoration projects in south Louisiana.

Morganza to the Gulf Hurricane Protection

When it became clear in the final hours of the 109th Congress that, yet again, we were not going to be able to pass a WRDA, other members of the Louisiana delegation and I introduced stand-alone legislation

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Meet Rep. Charlie Melancon

Rep. Charlie Melancon has been serving the people of Louisiana's Third Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives since January 2005. The district covers much of south Louisiana, stretching from St. Bernard Parish in the east, going through the river parishes and along the coast, and extending all the way to Iberia and St. Martin parishes in the west.

Since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita tore through south Louisiana in 2005, Rep. Melancon's top priority in Congress has been securing federal support and funding for hurricane recovery, better hurricane protection, and coastal restoration. Recently, Melancon worked with the rest of the Louisiana delegation to pass legislation giving Louisiana a significant share of offshore oil and gas drilling royalties to provide billions for

authorizing key sections of the Morganza to the Gulf project. Rep. Richard Baker and I were able to get the bill (H.R. 6428) passed in the House, and Senators Mary Landrieu and David Vitter introduced similar legislation in the Senate.

In a surprising turn of events, one lone Republican Senator from Oklahoma used a procedural tactic to block passage of our bill. Despite our pleas with him to reconsider, the Senator refused to lift his hold and the bill was unable to pass in the Senate before they adjourned.

Nonetheless, my colleagues from Louisiana and I are more determined than ever to push through reauthorization of the Morganza project as soon as possible in the 110th Congress.

Looking Forward to 2007: Giving Louisianians a Stronger Voice in Congress

I appreciate your confidence in the work that I am doing in Congress. I believe this coming year will mark a turning point for our country. The voices of those who have been ignored and left behind in recent years have finally been heard. I look forward to continuing to advocate for your needs and values for another two years.

I am honored as well that my colleagues in Congress chose me to serve on the Democratic Steering Committee, where I am working to make sure hurricane recovery, coastal restoration, and protecting our coastal communities from future storms are top priorities for Congress and the leadership. Furthermore, my nomination to the Energy and Commerce Committee will give Louisiana a strong voice on this powerful committee with jurisdiction over health, energy, environment, telecommunications, commerce, and oversight issues. I look forward to this challenging new opportunity to serve the people of Louisiana.

I hope you and your family have a wonderful end to 2006 and a prosperous 2007. I will be home in south Louisiana for several weeks, visiting with constituents and listening to your concerns.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office toll free at 866-289-9210 with your comments and concerns. For more news and helpful information, please visit my

provide billions for future hurricane protection and coastal restoration projects.

Rep. Melancon lives with his wife Peachy in the town of Napoleonville in Assumption Parish.

website at www.melancon.house.gov.

Sincerely,



CHARLIE MELANCON
Member of Congress

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